



MAY 2014 NEWSPAPER

BOOK REVIEW

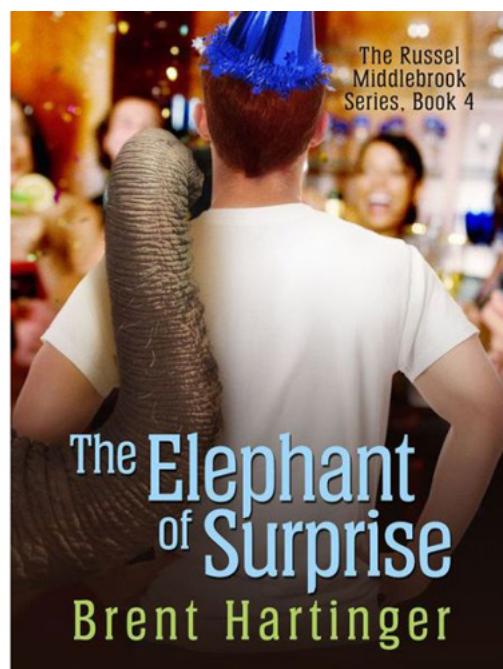
The Elephant of Surprise by Brent Hartinger

In the fourth installment of the Russel Middlebrook series, we've once again brought back to Goodkind High and going along with Russel as he meets a new guy Wade; Min, who know something is up with her girlfriend Leah, but not exactly what it is; and Gunnar in his wonderful heterosexual eccentricity. This is a LGBT Teen series, but is also enjoyed by adults.

The book opens with a brief synopsis of the first three books (Geography Club, The Order of the Poison Oak, and Double Feature: Attack of the Soul-Sucking Brain Zombies/Bride of the Soul-Sucking Brain Zombies (also published as Split Screen)), so it is not 100% necessary to read them before reading this one, but I do recommend that you do go back and read them so you will have the whole story.

This series has characters we can relate to, and situations we may be familiar with. I started this series while I was still on the street and am extremely happy to be able to continue it during my incarceration. I am anxiously awaiting any further installments to this wonderful series.

Indy



BLACK AND PINK ENDORSES #NOT1MORE

Among the two million immigrants deported by the Obama administration—1,100 people deported every day, and 34,000 people caged in immigration detention centers every single night—are countless LGBTQ individuals and their family, friends, and loved ones. Under the current system of detention and deportation, LGBTQ immigrants, especially transgender women of color, often experience horrific treatment within immigration detention centers, including violence, deprivation of necessary medical care, dehumanization and assaults on basic dignity, psychological torture in solitary confinement, and rape. A recent study demonstrated that transgender women survivors made up 20% of substantiated sexual assault claims in immigration detention. Many detained LGBTQ immigrants simply give up and accept deportation rather than continue to fight for the asylum that they qualify for under existing law because their detention conditions are so unbearable. Too many of our deported community members then end up facing the violence and sometimes murder that they had originally come to the United States to flee. The current immigration detention and deportation crisis harms us deeply, and we call on President Obama to act within his powers to end the cruel and

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senseless tearing apart of LGBTQ people's communities.

We also call on President Obama to end Secure Communities and other programs which funnel immigrants into the deportation machinery through local law enforcement, particularly those that experience biased policing based on race, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity. Too many of our community members end up in deportation proceedings because they are arrested after calling police for help in a domestic violence situation because the officer made assumptions about what intimate partner violence looks like. Too many transgender women of color are deported because of pretextual arrests for drug possession or sex work leading to criminal charges being immediately dropped and transfer to immigration detention. President Obama has the power to stop these programs so that our non-citizen community members do not live in fear that any minor interaction with police could lead to their deportation. As those living and working in the intersections of LGBTQ and immigrant identities, we join immigrant activists across the country to say that two million deportations is two million too many and to call on President Obama to act immediately for Not One More Deportation! <http://transgenderlawcenter.org/archives/10129>



Title: Liberation Not Deportation

Artist: Zuleica Zepeda

Description: The hummingbird is a symbol of peace, love and happiness. To many indigenous people, the hummingbird believed to represent the physical form of a spirit helper and guide. Inspired by my ancestors deep spirituality, I used the hummingbird as a symbol to communicate dreams, thoughts, her/his-tory and movement. Website: www.zuleicazepeda.com

¡EL PERIÓDICO DE BLACK AND PINK AHORA DISPONIBLE EN ESPAÑOL! / BLACK AND PINK NEWSPAPER NOW AVAILABLE IN SPANISH!

La policia, los tribunales, y el sistema de prisiones en los Estados Unidos acosan a gente de color, particularmente a gente negra, latín@, árabe, o indígena. Casi 1 al 3 de los prisioneros hablan español como lengua materna. Queremos que nuestro periódico sea lo más disponible posible para cualquiera persona quien quiera leerlo. Somos una familia más fuerte cuando más gente nos pueden entender.

The US police, court, and prison system targets people of color, particularly Black, Latin@, Arab, and Indigenous/American Indian people. Nearly 1 in 3 prisoners' first language is Spanish. We want our newspaper to be as available as possible to everyone who wants to read it. We are a stronger family when more people can understand us.

Por favor, avisen a todos sus amigos lesbiana, gay, bisexual, transgenero, o kuir/queer quisieran recibir un periódico en español. Pueden escribir a:

Black and Pink - Spanish Newspaper
614 Columbia Rd.
Dorchester, MA 02125

Please tell all your Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and/or Queer friends who would like a newspaper in Spanish to write to:

Black and Pink - Spanish Newspaper
614 Columbia Rd.
Dorchester, MA 02125

SEND US YOUR HEADER ART!

Black and Pink wants to use your art as a newspaper header! We'll feature a different artist each month! Send us a drawing that says, "Black & Pink" or "Black and Pink."

Images should be no bigger than 10 inches in length and 3.5 inches in height. Smaller or larger images may be resized to fit.

This month's header is by Adam in Indiana!

WHAT'S INSIDE

Page 2

A Message from Jason
Black and Pink General Strategy Draft
Black and Pink California Prison Chapter

Page 3

Letters to Our Family

Page 4

Letters to Our Family Continued

Page 5

Arrested for Walking While Trans: An Interview with Monica Jones
Dee Farmer Won a Landmark Supreme Court Case Part 3

Page 6

Poetry from the Heart

Page 7

Dee Farmer Won a Landmark Supreme Court Case Part 3 Continued
Black and Pink California Prison Chapter Continued
Family Feedback Summary
On the Inside Artwork Form
Family Feedback

Page 8

Pen Pal Form
Addresses

Statement of Purpose

Black & Pink is an open family of LGBTQ prisoners and "free world" allies who support each other. Our work toward the abolition of the prison industrial complex is rooted in the experience of currently and formerly incarcerated people. We are outraged by the specific violence of the prison industrial complex against LGBTQ people, and respond through advocacy, education, direct service, and organizing.

Black & Pink is proudly a family of people of all races.

About this Newspaper

Since 2007, Black & Pink free world volunteers have pulled together a monthly newspaper primarily composed of material written by our family's incarcerated members. In response to letters we receive, more prisoners receive the newspaper each issue!

This month, the newspaper is being sent to: 5,209 prisoners!

Disclaimer:

Please note that the ideas and opinions expressed in the Black & Pink Newspaper are solely those of the authors and artists and do not necessarily reflect the views of Black & Pink. Black & Pink makes no representations as to the accuracy of any statements made in the Newspaper, including but not limited to legal and medical information. Authors and artists bear sole responsibility for their work. Everything published in the Newspaper is also on the internet—it can be seen by anyone with a computer. By sending a letter to "Newspaper Submissions," you are agreeing to have your piece in the Newspaper and on the internet. For this reason, we only publish First Names and State Location to respect people's privacy. Pieces may be edited to fit our anti-oppression values and based on our Editing Guidelines.

Call for Submissions to HOT PINK!

Seeking erotic short stories and poems by Black & Pink incarcerated and free-world family members for a new 'zine. Please send submissions to our Black & Pink - HOT PINK. This is a voluntary project, and no money will be offered for submissions, but you might get the chance to share your spicy story with many others! To subscribe to receive erotica, write to our address, Black & Pink - GENERAL.

A MESSAGE FROM JASON

Dear friends,

I hope this note finds you as well as possible. As I write this note I am sitting in the Black and Pink Boston office with our new person, Ty, working on the art project. It is exciting that we are able to pay some formerly incarcerated people to do the work of Black and Pink. One small piece of our effort to keep building the power of those most affected by the harm of the prison industrial complex.

May 1st is International Workers' Day, honored in countries all around the world. This is a day that remembers the Haymarket riots in Chicago in 1886. Workers in Chicago were organizing and fighting for the 8 hour work day, trying to stop bosses from overworking their workers. During the rally on May 1st a bomb went off and then the police responded by shooting at protesters, killing four of them. After May 1st, the police responded by going after labor organizers, many of whom were anarchists. The government ended up charging and convicting 8 labor organizers for the bombing (even though there was no evidence, something many of us know about our own cases very well). Four of these men were executed, one killed himself in prison, and the others did years inside. May 1st honors those who have dedicated their lives to improving the lives of workers. It is also a reminder that there is so much more work for us to do.

Prisoner labor justice is one big piece of the labor movement that needs more work. In the end of April prisoners in Alabama planned a work strike. The California prisoner hunger strike got a lot of attention from people across the country. Hunger strikes are one form of resistance, work strikes are another. One of the prisoner organizers told a reporter at The Prison Complex "We feel like the hunger strikes hurt the individual more than they hurt the state... They bring in the media they bring in the attention, but it brings a tremendous amount of suffering on the individual, and so what we did we had to figure out how can we attack this system at the core."

As you read this, can you imagine a work stop at the prison you are locked up in? Can you imagine the demands you would come up with? Many, many prisoners across the country are working for pennies while they are locked up. There are also many prisoners who are on lists waiting to get some jobs. There are private corporations that make many millions of dollars off of prisoner labor. The far majority of prisons could not function without prisoners working in the kitchen, cleaning the bathrooms, running the power stations, fixing things, and simply maintaining the day-to-day operations of the prison. When prisoners organize together as workers there is much power. Have you ever been part of these kinds of organizing efforts? Knowing that prison administrations crack down hard on resistance on the inside, how could efforts like this succeed?

Being from Massachusetts I have heard quite a bit about an effort organized by prisoners in the 1970s as the National Prisoner Reform Association. They considered themselves a union of prisoners. They were fighting for better treatment. They were fighting for better pay. They were fighting for justice as incarcerated people. I know that the dynamics of prison jobs is really complicated. Some people are dying to go to work while others are forced to work against their will. In each prison, with each prisoner, it is important to find out what the struggles and demands are. Our fights for justice need to be as specific as our experiences of injustice are. We need collective power, so we need to listen to everyone's voice. Prisoner struggle is part of workers liberation. During this month of May I encourage everyone to think about what we need to do as Black and Pink to keep pushing the movement forward. We do our work knowing that once there were no prisons, that day will come again.

In loving solidarity,
Jason

Page 2

B&P GENERAL STRATEGY: DRAFT

Hi Family,

The Leadership Circle met and began to create a strategy for how our work will meet our goals, supporting LGBQ/T people in prison and abolishing the prison industrial complex. This is the beginning, we will be asking for feedback on one of these sections each month this year, so stay tuned :)

Black and Pink is building the power to dismantle oppressive systems, structures, mindsets and create a world of liberation and self determination. We do this through:

Solidarity/Movement Building: Strengthening our own LGBQ/T incarcerated and formerly incarcerated communities, and organizing in solidarity with politically aligned people, groups, and movements;

Abolitionist Reforms: Supporting abolitionist reforms that decrease the harm and reach of the PIC and build power for abolition

Direct Service: Providing direct service and support for queer and trans survival, education, and organizing.

Direct Action: Building the capacity to support strategic direct action

Accountability: Taking direction from and building leadership of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated LBGT/Q folks within an abolitionist framework, while recognizing the individuals in our Open Family hold many different politics and priorities

Education: Providing community education to further the analysis of Abolition and Liberatory politics, in the free world and behind bars, and in our communities and society in general.

Fundraising: Getting the resources we need in ways that build a movement and prevent us from being tied into state and corporate interests through the repressive non-profit industrial complex

Alternatives: Promoting Transformative Justice and Harm Reduction to replace the current system of injustice

Organization Building: Building B&P as an organization capable of sustaining our work

B&P CALIFORNIA PRISON CHAPTER

Dear Family,

Greetings with divine Love and utmost respect! First and foremost, I want to thank all of you loved ones who have supported my Advocacy Campaign by writing letters to the warden. Additionally, a citizen's complaint was filed with the CDCR Office of Internal Affairs (OIA) in Sacramento. We'll update y'all on the outcome of that. This has laid the groundwork for the next phase of the struggle for Trans-Liberation in California (aka "The Prison State").

These initial efforts met with obstinacy and retaliation by prison officials. However, this has only more strengthened my resolve and determination to push forward and dig in for the long-term. LGBTQ struggle!

Our advocacy campaign has led to the creation of a new B&P California Prison Chapter by me and two other transwomen. We drafted a Purpose, Analysis, and Structure (some of which is below) based on the original by the Boston Chapter. We encourage all of our family in California to join us in the struggle for Queer Liberation, peace, and justice. Goddess bless you all!

In Love and Solidarity,
Jennifer (BabyGirl)
Coordinator, Black & Pink California Prison Chapter

Continued on Page 7...

Dear Black & Pink Fam,

Hey everyone, my name's Dominique, I am a 28 year old Trans girl locked up in here in one of the many Texas prisons. I've been incarcerated since June 13, 2013, and was just recently introduced to the Black & Pink Newspaper! I must admit, it's comforting to hear other gays speak out and speak proud. I've been comfortably open living as a Trans female for going on 7 years now. I've been happiest living as the girl I am today, and if I could give any other girls advice, it would be to love yourself completely! When we find true happiness in ourselves and know we're beautiful, we don't have to go searching for it in other people! Feel me?

So here's my story. So as we all know a huge number of TS (transsexual/transgender) girls in the world are often working girls, etc, well I was one of them. I started first as a webcam model and soon was introduced to escorting by another TS friend. After working online for 6 months I was popped in a backpage sting in Las Colinas near Dallas- it's home of the Dallas Cowboys training camp. Okay, so upon getting popped I was searched and they found some meth on me. Long story short, I was sent to jail for prostitution and drugs. I was blessed with only 3 months and released. While there I was in one of the 8 gay dorms, where there's lots of unprotected sex, and I was one of the people doing it. I met a guy and we were slow at first but soon turned to much more. One day someone tells me the guy has HIV- my heart stopped and I was in shock! I didn't know what to believe so I talked to my guy and he denied it. But he did say he slept with someone with HIV, but didn't feel he had it since he was the one doing the f***ing, etc. So of course, I was twisted, Fam. I didn't know what to do. The month of my release I had the opportunity to get tested. I was scared, but I was negative.

I got out and within 2 days I was back online and bringing in the big bucks. I had become more headstrong with making money but I also had become more ruthless and careless sexually, Fam. Of course the drugs didn't make it any better. Not only was I having unprotected sex with f*** buddies, but also for fun with random guys I met on hook-up sites, and to top it off, I was often going bareback giving and receiving with clients! In my mind, I truly felt "who cares?" I most likely got HIV already, so it's not like I can get anything worse, right?

Okay, so I catch a dope charge in 2013. Thank god on arrival to prison they draw blood. I get a response one night from medical, saying I need to go in to see them Monday. I was scared, ya'll! To make matters worse, just 2 days before the response I was sexually involved with a guy I had just met, so I'm prepared for the worst.

Monday finally rolls in and I go to talk to the nurse over in C.I.D. I sat down and she closes the door. She tells me, that I tested positive... for syphilis! Omg I had to double check I heard right. Yep, I was HIV negative. I only had to get 3 painful antibiotic shots in my ass for 3 weeks.

The weird part was I was kinda ok with whatever my status ended up being. I felt for sure if I was HIV positive, I would be a proud advocate, etc. I would be a voice to others and I would help others to live safe and be safe. I am glad I don't have it. Don't get me wrong, I'm not downing any of our family living with HIV. Honestly it's like we are all one decision away from having HIV, Fam, all of us. Especially gay/trans males. It's scary as hell to know a huge chunk of people contracting HIV are getting it while in jails and institutions. But to know that we can make choices to be happy and healthy, regardless of being negative or positive, is awesome.

I know personally what it's like to get lost behind these walls with somebody else. At the end of the day, we are all human, and we all have needs, right? But that doesn't mean you can't be safe, people. In the mix of a hot sexual scenario, we should talk about safe sex, it might just save our lives. Here in Texas they charge \$0 to get tested in prison, I highly recommend that you do! Especially if sexually involved with another person, and tell them to do the same! By all means play if you want to play, but be honest and safe and don't play with other people's minds or hearts!

Ok, there you have it, Fam! That's my story! My heart goes out to all of you, those living with the disease and everyone else, I love you all and hope my story will inspire someone out there to be safe.

Always Sweet,
Dominique, Texas

Dear Black & Pink Family,

My name is Xavier, I'm a 22 year old Proud and Happy Gay man. I'm writing from prison in Illinois. The reason for my writing is to thank this new family that I've so recently been exposed to. A little about myself, well, my life now. At the age of 17 I was arrested for Agg. Arson and Armed Robbery in the city of E. St. Louis, Illinois. In 2010 I was sentenced to 12 years at 85%, marking my out date 2019, but due to my stupidity and carelessness I allowed myself to get out of concentration and caught another case which I received 8 years at 50%, Agg. Battery, which set my out date to April 2024.

I haven't witnessed a lot of the brutal actions and comments that a lot of my family members have, and my family (a select few) are still riding with me even with the knowledge of my living. Being incarcerated has brought upon a lot of depression in my life, but being able to read my family's Newspaper when it comes, and the family that surrounds me here in this prison keeps me going, little do they know it. But that's just an ice breaker to see if I was capable of doing so. So until next time,

Bye-Bye, Love Ya,
Xavier, aka X, Illinois

Dear Black & Pink Family,

I just received only my 3rd issue of B&P, so I'm relatively new to the Awesome B&P Family, but I'm an ol' Queer from way back. My name is Clifton but I'm known by all as Woffy, I'm 44 goin' on 17, and have been in and out of lock up since about '83. I haven't ever been acquainted with any group such as this B&P Family and I must say: You people are what makes life worth living. Never have I been able to read a publication and feel such love and unity as I do when I read the stories of my fellow "rainbow" Family!

The only thing that pisses me off is hearing what some of you go through at the hands of mean-spirited, ignorant pukes who are only afraid of what they don't understand! Those people are abundant and will never go away. Over the years, I've found myself in altercations, standing up for the Queens and other Gay folk because everyone just ain't built for it, and I hate bullies! I'd like to give a loud Shout out to CeCe; good luck out there and Good bless you. And keep smiling, please, you truly are beautiful.

I also have some words after reading about the grooming policy in Texas by Danielle. Here in Utah, in the late 80's and early 90's our Native Brothers had a battle with the system over their long hair, and their religious culture and beliefs. They (we) won that lawsuit and to this day we have no grooming standards.

The Religious Freedom Restoration Act might help you on your way and also I have some case law that I hope will help. *Turner v. Safely*, 482 U.S. 78, 90-91 (1987). *O'Lone v. Estate of Shabazz*, 482 U.S. 342, 349-53 (1987). *Flagner v. Wilkinson*, 241 F. 3d 475, 486 (6th Cir. 2001). But reasonable opportunities must be afforded to all prisoners to express the religious freedom guaranteed by the First and Fourteenth Amendment without fear or penalty. *Jaben v. Moore*, 788 F Supp. 500 (D. Kam. 1992) and *McKinney v. Maryland*, 952 F2d 350 (10th Cir. 1991). I wish there was more I could do, for everyone who suffers at the hands of evil!

I'm having my very own pissing contest with the Utah Dept of Corrections over some false statements they put in another inmates Board of Pardons file. I was put into a mix that had nothing to do with me, but the philistines will lie just to gain the edge they need with flagrant disregard of whom they jeopardize. But I've still got 29 months before I end my sentence, so I plan to file my case as soon as I get it all prepared...I'll keep you posted.

Big love to all of you Gay, and Str8 people who ride with us. I love you all Bigger than the Sky! Never give up, never give in!

Peace and Love from the Wolfman, Utah

Dear Black & Pink Family,

I read the Newspaper today for the first time and my thought was "finally people who will understand me." I have been in the Tennessee Dept of Corrections for almost 5 years and it is no place for someone like me who people consider different because of my sexual preference. I desperately wish to connect to others like me, gay and proud!

David, Tennessee

We got you on the pen pal list, David :)

Dear Black & pink Family,

I am glad to see a supportive group of people I can call family. My name is John aka Amber. I'm 25 years old from Fitchburg, Massachusetts, housed in a Massachusetts Correctional Institute. I have not been in long, but I have lost a lot. The one thing jail gave me was the courage to admit that I am a sister. I am getting no help for being transgender where I am at, but hearing sisters' and brothers' stories gives me hope and strength. I thank you and I am here for you all.

With my love,

Amber, Massachusetts

To My Black & Pink Family,

First off, I want to say Hello to all my Black & Pink family, I have been getting the Newspaper now for a few months, and I always look forward to receiving it and reading how other family members are doing behind bars.

I have to admit that a lot of you do have it bad, where you are, especially compared to what I deal with here in Nevada. I have never had it held against me for my sexual preference. The main thing that I have held against me and that I am fighting for is my religious faith. I am a Pagan Druid and the prison establishment here holds it against those of us who follow a Pagan path.

I have come out to my family here inside the prison, but I have yet to come out to my family out on the street. My family is old fashioned and I am just a bit scared as to how they will react. I plan on telling them after I get out of prison, which I hope is October 2025.

I just wanted to write and say Hello and to tell all of the Family who is being persecuted for your sexual orientation, those of us here in Nevada have you in our thoughts and prayers and we hope that one day the establishment will see the errors of their way and treat all of you as a regular human being.

And for those who are following the Pagan path, don't let anyone tell you that you are wrong in your religious faith. Stay strong. Blessed be to all!!

Sincerely,

Paul "Paulie," Nevada

LETTERS TO OUR FAMILY CONTINUED

Dear Black & Pink Brothers and Sisters,

First and foremost, my name is Teddy, I am a 32 year old half-Hispanic gay male. I have been incarcerated continuously since the age of 15. I am currently doing a 32 year, 11 month, 30 day sentence in Iowa. I am writing to share an experience that happened to me back in 2005. I relive this experience daily and need to share with those of us out there who can relate and understand.

I met this guy who I really liked. He seemed nice at the time and we got along great, but I didn't want to rush into a sexual relationship and ruin what we had. I kept putting him off every time he asked, but he took it a step further.

One morning when our cell doors opened I woke up to someone on top of me pulling my shorts down. I tried to push him off but he was too strong and he raped me. I immediately brought it to staff attention but they just laughed and told me, "You better start working out because it'll happen again." I was so scared I didn't know what to do.

A few days later while at work, I went to the bathroom and as I closed the door it flew back and hit me in the face. The next thing I know I was told to shut up or die. This guy raped me again, and yet again when I went to staff they told me to get back to work. I went back to my work station and started to cry and when I looked up, this guy is standing in front of me and told me to be prepared because after lunch he was going to have another go.

I was so scared and I didn't want to go through it again, so when he turned around, I hit him with a hammer and sat back down and cried.

Needless to say prison officials didn't care about inmate safety and ignored my cries for help. I had to do something I didn't want to do to protect myself because staff wouldn't. I got shipped out of here in 2008 over this incident and placed into federal custody. My life was in constant danger because I'm openly gay. I was almost killed twice. I got sent back to Iowa in Oct 2013 because the feds no longer wanted me. My life has been hell since.

I am currently in the hole but what happens when I get out? What do I got to do to get prison officials to open their eyes? To be treated with respect and not be ignored? I pray that things have changed while I've been gone. Time will only tell.

Thank you Black & Pink family for your support, your letters, and your voices. Keep giving us encouraging words and the strength to wake up and survive another day.

Trying to stay strong,
Teddy, Iowa

Hey y'all, it's Mia! Hugs and kisses. Well, oh my gosh, I have so much to say and limited amount of time. Well, anyway first and foremost all of my love to our beautiful family. It's so good that we have this network of friends and people who know and share the pain we go through. I wanted to take this time to put my story out there to give someone hope to keep positive and keep their head up 'cuz even when the mascara is smeared by tears, it's still going to be ok. Speaking of, you know what really sucks about being a transgender female in prison- no frickin' make up!

I've been a transgender female since I was four. I knew I was a girl. I was taken away from my family early and spent all of my life in foster care. When I was seven I was brutally raped, I almost died. My foster Dad did it. Well, it wasn't until I was 12 years old I began to realize I love being in a skirt and pretty. Well, I got caught by my foster Dad and his son. Well, for the next year and a half, I was a sex slave chained to the bed and prostituted out to their friends. I made the best out of the situation and learned I could enjoy a sense of power when I would be dolled up and used my body to please them. I was born a boy, but in that situation I figured out my true self.

Well, needless to say, eventually I snapped and tried to kill myself and it was there at the hospital that doctor saw what was going on and my foster parents went to jail and I went to a group home. Well, from then I kept it a secret, not telling anyone because of the violent people around me. I was at war with myself. Well, I had 3 kids and tried to live the life "they" wanted me to. A normal boy. But I felt empty inside.

So I came out to my baby's mom, and later to a celly in prison, and then my mom and family, who told me not to write- disowned me! It broke my heart, but another beautiful woman lifted my spirits. She told me to get my head back up, that it will be all right. She got my confidence up. As I read the stories others have confided, I know I was blessed, and not alone that you are all with me. I am now OK and don't care what anyone thinks of me. I am a beautiful 30 year old bisexual transgender woman and proud to be part of this family. I thank you guys so much and love each and every one of you with all my heart. My goals now are education, bettering myself for the streets in 8½ years, and to find someone who loves me for me and have a settled down life with a family.

To everyone thinking about coming out, we are all here for you, accept you for you and all your quirks, and will not turn our back on you, because you do matter and you are beautiful. I love you, hugs and kisses.

Mia, California

Wuz up Family,

My name is Sleepy. I'm a 27 year old bisexual male. I'm currently incarcerated in Colorado. For the past 4 years I have been shut down and shunned by the same people who claim to love and care for me, my family. After I found out that I was HIV positive in 2010, I have tried my hardest to reach out and share my pain and difficulties, hoping to receive the support I

need for this new and painful journey, and one by one they all have shunned me and disappeared, leaving me to die alone.

I found out I was HIV+ 2 years into my incarceration. The last phone call I had with my Ex-GF was the most shocking because it was her who passed it on to me. Which was 7 months prior to my incarceration in 2008. She knew she was HIV positive, but claim she didn't tell me 'till after I had already found out in 2010, because she "forgot to tell me." Her exact words. It's so messed up how people can be so cruel and irresponsible. I also find it hard to believe that it is the ones that say they love you, and they are there for you, but in the time of show and prove they turn their backs.

For the past 4 years I have also been trying to receive medical care and medication for my HIV, but that too has been shut down. These people have refused to put me on any medication and I have done everything I can think of to get the proper medical care, but nothing has gone my way. I have watched my health go from bad to worse, and just knowing that if I don't get help soon, I might not make it, is sending me down a path of depression and hopelessness.

For the past year and more I have been reading your stories and poems. And my heart goes out to each and every one of yall. The thing I like the most is that even though we are all different genders, races, backgrounds, and the fact that we all got our own story to tell, is the fact that we all stick together as one no matter what. And it is because of all of yall that my most hardest and scariest time has been made easier, and from the bottom of my heart I just want to Thank each and every one of yall. I don't know if I will get a chance to write again, but I would like to close with a request: you all be safe and responsible, and a quote for all my Black & Pink and worldwide LGBTQ Family: United we stand, Divided we fall, But as a family we shall conquer it all!!!

I Truly Love Yall,
Sleepy, Colorado

Hello! My name is T. Bear and I am a gay white male residing in the Wisconsin DOC. I hope the family at Black & Pink are doing well. I enjoy receiving the Newspaper and hearing how everyone is doing. Many times it is hard for me to relate, because my experience in prison is much different than most of the ones I read about. Although having a relationship in prison is not allowed, I have never experienced any ill effects of being gay. Yes, occasionally someone will call me out of my name, but this is common whether someone is gay or not. So I spend a lot of time praying for those people who don't have it as easy as me. Well, until I pick up my pen again, keep your heads up and only down when you pray.

T. Bear, Wisconsin

T. Bear recommended a pen pal program, which we will look into and add to our resources section if it makes sense :)

Dear Black & Pink,

I've watched the Newspaper continue to grow into an excellent publication for our community. Thanks to all who help! A big shout out to my incarcerated friends across the country! Please write in to B&P with your letters for the Newspaper because it's what makes it so awesome. I love to hear what's going on in other states. Spend your time educating yourself and researching in the law library. Take care of yourself physically, and practice safer sex.

Florida prisons are some of the worst in the U.S. Hardly any personal property, awful canteen, almost no programs, ridiculous rules, harsh conditions, abuse and misery. The food is horrible and minimal, zero budget for recreation, and it's expensive just to survive.

Remember that our captors are the real enemy, not the person you don't like in your dorm. We need unity and backbone to make anything better in prison. Get together and file complaints when something is wrong.

Peace out,
Ryan, Florida

Black & Pink Family,

Hi, my name is Cody from Indiana. I go by Coco in prison and I just wanted to come out and say it, I'm gay, I don't like to be judged so I usually never say I'm gay to people, but I'm tired of being something I'm not. People don't understand us. This is my coming out letter. I'm gay and I'm proud.

Coco aka Cody, Indiana

Dear Black & Pink,

Just got my February '14 Newspaper this morning. The mailroom supervisor tried to withhold it, citing "security issues." However, upon appeal to our superintendent, he overruled the supervisor in favor of inmate response.

For the life of me, I cannot see what the supervisor found objectionable. Her decisions are not always based on policy. Rather, they are based upon personal bias and her opinion, "dinosaur thinking." I thought it would be good for everyone to know this happens and you can fight it and win. Keep me on the list, and keep sending the Newspaper as I am nothing but enduring and adamant regarding censorship.

Jerry
(Real name and state withheld on request)

STRUGGLING FOR RIGHTS!

ARRESTED FOR WALKING WHILE TRANS: AN INTERVIEW WITH MONICA JONES

In Phoenix, Arizona, you can be arrested for repeatedly stopping and engaging a passerby in conversation. This may, under Phoenix law, be evidence that you are “manifesting” an intent to engage in prostitution. Of course, this could also be evidence that you are lost or canvassing for a political group or simply talking about the weather. The difference between “innocent” and “criminal” behavior often comes down to how a person looks. Transgender women of color are often profiled by police as engaging in sex work for simply being outside and going about their daily routines. Amnesty International documented this disproportionate targeting by police of transgender women as sex workers in a 2005 report. “[S]ubjective and prejudiced perceptions of transgender women as sex workers often play a significant role in officers’ decisions to stop and arrest transgender women,” the report concluded. One woman told Amnesty, “‘No tenemos el derecho a vivir.’ (We don’t have the right to live.)” Black transgender activist Monica Jones knows this all too well. Last May, Monica was arrested under the disturbingly vague and overbroad manifestation ordinance. “I believe I was profiled as a sex worker because I am a transgender woman of color, and an activist.” Monica explained.

“I am a student at ASU, and fear that these wrongful charges will affect my educational path. I am also afraid that if am sentenced, I will be placed in a men’s jail as a transgender woman, which would be very unsafe for me. Prison is an unsafe place for everyone, and especially trans people.” On April 11, 2014, Monica will go to trial and the ACLU will be assisting in her constitutional challenge to the manifestation ordinance. Together we hope to send a message about the injustices that transgender women of color so often experience at the hands of the police.

This week Monica and I discussed Project ROSE, the profiling of trans women of color, and where she finds her inspiration.

Chase Strangio (ACLU): In May of 2013, you were protesting Project ROSE in Phoenix. What is Project ROSE? Why have you and other activists in Phoenix and across the country been protesting it?

Monica Jones: Project ROSE is an anti-prostitution collaboration between the Arizona State University School of Social work, the Phoenix Police Department, and Catholic Charities, which claims to provide services to workers within the sex industry through a prostitution diversion program. Through massive street sweeps and online sting operations targeting workers within the sex industry and bringing them into the program without the benefit of counsel, Project ROSE instead sends many participants to jail after they don’t qualify for the program or “fail” out of it, increasing the number of people in jail for prostitution-related charges.

Myself and others involved in the Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP) Phoenix have been protesting Project ROSE because we don’t believe consenting sex workers are victims, or that workers need to be arrested in order to get services.

Chase Strangio (ACLU): What are some of the most pressing issues facing trans people of color in your community?

Monica Jones: Some of the most pressing issues facing trans people are criminalization and threats of violence. All around the country trans people are targeted for police harassment. Due to discriminatory policing and social inequities experienced by trans people of color, nearly half of Black transgender people have been incarcerated at some point in their lives.

We also deal with increased harassment and violence on the streets by both civilians and police officers. We also face disproportionate job and housing discrimination. Trans women of color like myself, and trans individuals in general, have a huge unemployment rate due to discriminatory policies like Arizona being a “right to work” state, which makes it generally hostile for workers, and then a lack of affirmative employment protections for transgender people.

There is a lack of understanding of trans issues and the needs of trans communities. One example of the discrimination we face is the attempted passing of SB 1045 in Arizona, the “bathroom bill,” which would have made it illegal for trans individuals to use the bathroom of the opposite gender to which they were assigned at birth. We fought against that bill and won.

Chase Strangio (ACLU): In conversations about your case and police harassment of transgender women, people have mentioned the phrase “walking while trans.” Can you explain what that means? Does that resonate for you?

Monica Jones: “Walking while trans” is a saying we use in the trans community to refer to the excessive harassment and targeting that we as trans people experience on a daily basis. “Walking while trans” is a way to talk about the overlapping biases against trans people - trans women specifically - and against sex workers. It’s a known experience in our community of being routinely and regularly harassed and facing the threat of violence or arrest because we are trans and therefore often assumed to be sex workers.

I have been harassed by police four times since my initial arrest last May. The police have stopped me for no real reason when I have been walking to the grocery store, to the local bar, or visiting with a friend on the sidewalk. The police have even threatened me with ‘manifestation with intent to prostitute’ charge, while I was just walking to my local bar!

Chase Strangio (ACLU): You have done such amazing work and have inspired so many people to stand up to harassment and violence. Who inspires you?

Monica Jones: More than anything, my family inspires me. My family

has always been loud and stood up for what is right, and they taught me to do the same. Also, some of my teachers and professors that have supported me and steered me to become an activist have inspired me. And my friends in the activist community here in Phoenix inspire me to keep fighting. *UPDATE: Monica Jones was convicted of “manifesting prostitution” in April 2014 and is planning an appeal. <https://www.aclu.org/blog/lgbt-rights-criminal-law-reform-hiv-aids-reproductive-freedom-womens-rights/arrested-walking>*

DEE FARMER WON A LANDMARK SUPREME COURT CASE (PART 3) BY ALISON FLOWERS

Part 1 provide as overview of the landmark US Supreme Court Case, Farmer v. Brennan, background on Farmer’s life growing up in Baltimore, Maryland, and her experience being housed in a male prison. After being moved to another male prison, Farmer was assaulted by another prisoner and reported the assault. Without being represented by an attorney, she chose to file a federal suit in 1991, bringing charges against prison officials. Her case was initially dismissed, and her subsequent appeal denied. Lawyers from the ACLU helped after she petitioned the US Supreme Court. Part 2 discusses the use of pronouns in Farmer’s case and the impact the case had on other cases, stating that Farmer’s case is a “user’s manual” for lawyers. Farmer has brought forth numerous cases.

She once won a claim under the Americans with Disabilities Act, arguing that as a blind person she was denied equal access to the prison law library. In another discrimination case, Farmer brought a class-action suit against then U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno and the director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons for (among other things) failing to offer African-American hair- and skincare products “while similar products designed for use by other races are available.”

Farmer lost that one; the court determined that she had failed to show Reno or the director was aware of the allegedly unconstitutional conditions. And she lost an equal-protection lawsuit that she filed after being forbidden to work in food service owing to her HIV-positive status.

In fact, she also wound up losing the suit that led to her landmark Supreme Court case.

The ruling in Farmer v. Brennan only remanded the case for retrial. That’s where Gonring came in.

“I felt sorry for her being in the position she was, being female in an environment where she didn’t want to be,” he says now. “I was still reserved,” the attorney adds, “because she made a living fooling people.”

Gonring was surprised to find his client warm and engaging. As they prepared to make their case to the jury, he and a colleague did their best to accommodate Farmer, asking the Dane County, Wisconsin, Sheriff’s Office to allow her to have makeup brought to her in jail.

The response, as Gonring remembers it: “The only foundation in this building is in the walls.”

The jury found for the defendants.

“The bottom line was the jury never believed she was raped,” Gonring says.

After the trial, Gonring and Farmer parted ways, returning to their respective caseloads. Months later, though, his office began receiving bills for copying services involving his former client’s other cases.

He didn’t pay them.

“I was amused by it more than anything else,” Gonring says.

A year later, Farmer sent him a Valentine’s Day card. When he opened it, thousands of tiny metallic hearts tumbled forth, dousing his desk in red sparkles.

Gonring says he still finds a shiny remnant from time to time and smiles.

A few years back, Elizabeth Alexander heard Dee Farmer had died.

She admits she hadn’t kept up with her over the years. In fact, she has never met Farmer.

“I really didn’t focus on her as a person,” Alexander explains. “I was really focused on trying to figure out a way to pull this out for all prisoners.”

It turned out the news about Farmer’s passing was a red herring floated by Farmer herself.

Not that she wasn’t seriously ill. She has a history of psychosis, bipolar disorder, hearing voices (including the Devil’s, according to her lawyer in a federal court transcript). She has suffered from hepatitis, anxiety, and depression (the latter two of which worsened, she once argued in a civil-rights complaint, when officials transferred her to a so-called supermax facility; prosecutors noted Farmer was transferred because officials suspected she had participated in an identity-theft scheme to obtain credit in the names of the wardens).

AIDS had taken such a toll on her body that in 2005 a judge freed her from prison, sending her home to, as he put it, “meet his maker.”

“She was having extreme difficulty seeing and looked to be very frail and in ill health,” says Nicholas Szokoly, who represented Farmer during her release.

Farmer went home and participated in a clinical trial for AIDS patients at Johns Hopkins Hospital.

She had gained back some weight by the time authorities in an unmarked car pulled up to her elderly mother’s row house in northeast Baltimore in 2006. They hauled her away in handcuffs, her face angled down at the pavement. She pleaded guilty to obstruction of justice and misuse of a death certificate.

Less than two weeks into her 18-month sentence, Farmer wrote a letter to a federal court in Maryland complaining that correctional medical

All I want from you
 Is to accept me as I am, look past the life I live, and respect the man I am.
 All I want from you
 Is to relax, stretch, & breath, look through the eyes I see. Then understanding you'll receive.
 Smiling faces, love & support in every which way.
 No stressing, the euphoric feeling of blessings.
 All I want from you
 Is to hear me loud and clear, all truths, no beef in and no worries of me pushin up on you.
 All I want from you
 Is friendship, never ending from start to finish, smiles that's winning and love that's never ending.
 Xavier aka X, Illinois

Concrete and Steel

Concrete and Steel
 Dry and stale meal
 Confused how to feel
 Couldn't get a deal
 So now I'm stuck here
 Without much cheer
 Or a cold beer
 Feeling kinda queer
 What a New Year!

Concrete and Steel
 Can this be real?
 Another unsavory meal
 What is the deal?
 Am I still here?
 Missing my dear
 Feeling really queer
 Happy New Year!

Michael,
 Washington State



Drowning

Rain
 Pouring down
 The perfect storm
 I feel it now
 Outside
 I free myself
 Soaked, Drenched
 It pours on me
 Free
 Only now
 Only wet
 Can I be me
 I feel alive
 The waters rise
 My soul is washed
 My life is cleans'd
 I breathe it in
 I hold my breath
 Then breathe again
 I breathe, the water
 Fills up my lungs
 I'm drowning now
 From deep within
 I try to cough
 I try to yell
 But all I do
 Soaks my lungs more
 I feel so free
 But not for long
 My time is short
 My brain goes numb
 My heart beats hard
 My lungs, my veins
 Fill'd with water
 I am not done
 But almost there
 This poem must end
 I am no more...

Jonathan, New Jersey

New Song

Allow me to try and express with paper and pen
 How I've had more than one friend
 Who's only want was for this life to end
 Wishing to embrace that eternal sleep
 Where no more pain may creep
 No more reasons for broken children to weep
 Trying to escape their living nightmares
 With one last stand
 Thinking Who cares
 They'll never understand
 But baby hold on
 I say please stay strong
 'Cuz everybody brings a new song.
 Charlemagne, Texas

Here I Am

They thought it was over,
 Thought I was resigned to die.
 Never would I make it,
 Locked in a cell, here I lie.

Risen from the ash,
 As a Phoenix I will fly.
 Never being outdone,
 This eagle escapes your eye.

You wish it were over,
 For this game you could not win.
 Just feast your eyes here,
 Seeing me once, never again.

Stick Man, Pennsylvania

DEE FARMER WON A LANDMARK SUPREME COURT CASE
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5 services had failed to give her AIDS medication. She later stated in a response to the court that the “medication that the [Johns Hopkins] doctor prescribed I receive some of it some of the time and none of it the rest of the time. It is difficult to tell.”

Seven years later, a member of Farmer’s current legal team says her face shows signs of stubble and dreariness. She’s tall, topping six feet, and wears her hair in tight braids. Her voice is high-pitched but not decidedly womanly. She considers herself asexual.

Farmer, who has taken up Bible study and listens to gospel music, likens her situation to that of the Old Testament’s beleaguered Job.

She says she is on a reprieve from death.

“He gave me the time to right some wrongs and to, by His Grace, impact the lives of others,” Farmer writes in an email — one that, like all of her correspondence with the Voice, originates from the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Brooklyn. (Corrections officials denied the Voice’s request to visit Farmer at the facility.)

Some things, however, haven’t changed.

Earlier this month she was sentenced for a crime she committed while behind bars. <http://www.villagevoice.com/2014-01-29/news/dee-farmer-v-brennan-prison-rape-elimination-act-transgender-lgbt-inmate-rights/>

BLACK & PINK - CALIFORNIA PRISONS STATEMENT OF PURPOSE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Black & Pink California Prisons Chapter is part of an open family of LGBTQ prisoners and “free world” allies who support each other. Our work toward the abolition of the prison industrial complex is rooted in the experience of currently and formerly incarcerated people. We are outraged by the specific violence of the California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation (CDCR) against LGBTQ people, and respond through advocacy, education, direct service, and organizing.

B&P CALIFORNIA PRISON CHAPTER

Current Projects

- An Advocacy Campaign for transgender women in men’s facilities who are experiencing discriminatory harassment, sexual violence, lack of

access to adequate health care, etc.

- Contributing art, poetry, letters by LGBTQ prisoners to the monthly Black & Pink Newspaper.
- Educating prison inmates and staff members about LGBTQ issues, distributing information and literature, such as the B&P Newspaper, and organizing LGBTQ prisoners to take action against homophobic/transphobic violence whenever necessary.
- This Black & Pink California Prison Chapter was started in October 2013 at Kern Valley State Prison (KVSP) and will spread across the state. We will support one another, share the world of our organizing efforts, and build our Family inside and outside the walls of California prisons. We will be accountable to each other and to our Leadership Circle (LC). We know that those most hurt by the violence of prisons have the knowledge of how to tear them down. We will increase our statewide membership in California prisons.

In Struggle,

Jennifer, Jazzie, & Morena

FAMILY FEEDBACK SUMMARY

We asked in the January 2014 newspaper what other resources you want us to list in the paper, and we got some great responses! The top answers were: Books, HIV/AIDS info, trans* services, and pen pal services.

Sample responses:

“Rehabilitation programs, women’s resources, LGBTQ advocacy”

“If you are unable to respond to family mail in a timely manner, especially those in danger seeking and needing urgent outside intervention... [then] arguably the greatest resource would be those who call and advocate on behalf of those of us imprisoned, by writing letters to wardens, etc.”

“I would like to see resources that could help prisoners more easily communicate with the outside world. For example people who are willing to help prisoners set up an email, Twitter, and other social networking accounts and help the prisoner run and maintain them, teach them how to put together a resume, to help with re-entry”

ON THE INSIDE ARTWORK FORM

Black & Pink is facilitating the revival of the art program in a new way, called On the Inside! If you are an artist, here’s how it will work. Create any artwork that you would like (drawings, cards, paintings). We are seeking art drawn in ball point pen or pencil on letter-sized copy paper. The exhibit is taking shape along the following themes: portraits, self-portraits, spirituality, erotic, love, advocacy, gender, pop culture, celebrities, sports cars, crime & punishment, and prison life. Some of the artwork will be accepted for an upcoming exhibit; the artist will be promptly compensated \$50 for all accepted artwork (except \$10 for cards) and postage expenses incurred. Any artwork that isn’t accepted for the exhibit for any reason will be promptly returned to the artist, or other address. If your artwork is accepted for the Exhibition, you assign all right, title and interest in the work to us (in other words you transfer ownership of the art and its copyrights to the Exhibit coordinators) as consideration for participation in the show. The artwork will never be resold, and will likely be donated to an LGBTQ Archive in years to come. **Please do not write your name and number anywhere on the front of the artwork to protect your privacy. We are all excited to see what you create! Please fill out a questions 1 through 6 once, and questions 7 through 10 on separate slip like this for each piece of artwork you submit. Please mail the artwork with the information below on slips to:**

On the Inside, PO Box 173, 2658 Griffith Park Blvd. , Los Angeles, CA 90039

1) Your preferred name for the exhibit. We will only include the first initial of your last name in the exhibit.

2) Your gender pronouns (eg. she / he / xe / they).

3) How do you identify? (Optional: gender, sexuality, race, age).

4) Your legal name, number, and mailing address.

5) If my artwork is not accepted for the exhibit:

Send it to my address (please list)

Send it to another address (please list)

Black & Pink can keep and display it

6) Preferred method of compensation:

Donation into commissary account (Please include deposit slips or instructions):

Magazines/books (Details)

Other:

7) Title of artwork (for display at exhibit).

8) Description of artwork (for display at exhibit).

9) Anything else you’d like the exhibit curator to know about the artwork or about yourself which can be shared / feel free to write on another page, and please note that the exhibit curator is not able to be a penpal):

BLACK & PINK INCARCERATED FAMILY FEEDBACK!

rip slip here

Please take a look at the draft of Black and Pink’s General Strategy on page 2 and let us know your thoughts and suggestions on any or all of the strategy sections.

PEN PAL FORM



Black & Pink LGBTQ Pen-Pal Information Form!

If you have not done so in the past 12 months (to reduce mail so we reply faster), please mail this form to **Black and Pink –Form**, and include a picture & “first letter” written to a potential new pen-pal for us to scan if you wish!

“I understand that anyone who uses the internet can search and find my information and picture. I agree to this information being posted online.” Sign: _____ Date _____

Preferred Name: _____ Pronoun (she/he/ze): _____

Your Legal Name: _____ #: _____

Address: _____

Please check the types of pen-pal relationships you are interested in:

(Please note most “free world” pen-pals that visit our website are *not* interested in romance or sexy letters)

	Having a pen-pal friendship	Having a pen-pal romance	Receive cards from “card parties”?
	Writing about social justice	Writing sexy/erotic letters	Yes, send me cards _____ No _____

Please provide this optional information if you want! People can search most of these items on our website:

Age & Birth date	/ /	In Solitary Confinement?			
Race				Does anyone write you now? How many people write?	
Gender					
Sexuality				Specific types of pen-pals you are looking for: <i>(Most pen-pals want non-romantic friendships)</i>	
Faith					
Non-English Language					
Release Date?				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can you get mail from / write to <i>all other prisoners</i> ?	No, I can't! Yes, I can!
HIV Status (private)					

Tell us about who you are (for example, your background, hobbies and interests, beliefs, situation, etc!):

If you have a webpage: www._____

Do we have permission to display a picture of you from a corrections website? _____ Yes _____ No

Names and email addresses of any current pen-pals so we can involve them in Black and Pink:

Your address, email and phone upon release (if applicable) so that we can keep you involved in the family:

MAIL TO: Black and Pink– Form, 614 Columbia Rd, Dorchester, MA 02125

ADDRESSES: PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESSES FOR MAIL!

Please Note: You can send multiple requests/topics in one envelope! Due to concerns about consent and confidentiality, you cannot sign up other people for the newspaper. However, we can accept requests from multiple people in the same envelope. There's no need to send separate requests in more than one envelope. If you are being released and would still like to receive a copy of the newspaper, please let us know the address we can send the newspaper to!

	Black & Pink - _____ 614 Columbia Rd Dorchester, MA 02125
If you would like to request:	Please write one or more of these topics in the top line of the address:
Newspaper Subscriptions, Pen-Pal Program, Address Change, Request Erotica, Religious Support & Volunteering (Send thank you cards to donors, etc.)	Black & Pink - General
Newspaper Submissions- Stories, Articles, Poems &Art	Black & Pink - Newspaper Submissions
Black & Pink Organization Feedback- Especially the slip on Page 7	Black & Pink - Feedback
Advocacy Requests- Include details about situation and thoughts about how calls or letters might help	Black & Pink - Advocacy
Submit to Erotica Zine	Black & Pink - HOT PINK
Stop Your Newspaper Subscription	Black & Pink – STOP Subscription

Pen Pal Program: LGBTQ prisoners can list their information and short non-sexual ad on the internet where free world people can see it and decide to write. There will be a Pen-Pal Request Form in the Newspaper every 4 months.